

**Tennessee Council for Career and Technical Education
Minutes
Public Forum
11/15/2010
Radisson Hotel at Opryland**

The Tennessee Council for Career and Technical Education (TCCTE) Public Forum was called to order at Radisson Hotel Opryland, Nashville, Tennessee, at 9:00 a.m.

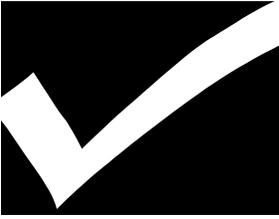
Council Members Present: James Neeley, Guy Derryberry, Carlos Hammonds, Jeffrey Lewis, James Long, Marvin Lusk, Hale Moss

Council Members Absent: Gary Booth, Senator Charlotte Burks, Julie Griggs, Bill Lawson, Hale Moss, Willie Slate, Paul Starnes

Chairman James Neeley presided. Minutes recorded by Joyce Dykes.

Public Forum Attendees:

First Name	Last Name	Representing	Speaking
Rep. Harry	Brooks	107 th General Assembly	
Thom	Smith	Director, Tennessee Council for Career and Technical Education	
Connie	Smithson	SE Service Center / Department of Education	No
Mark	Powers	Director, TN Technology Center @ Dickson	No
John	Townsend	Tennessee Board of Regents – Academic Affairs	Yes
James	King	Tennessee Board of Regents, TN Technology Centers	Yes
Tim	Parrott	CTE Director – Anderson County Schools	No
Sharon	Ridenour	CTE Director – Campbell County Schools	Yes
Steve	Clariday	CTE Director - Cleveland City Schools	No
Brad	Leach	CTE Director – DeKalb County Schools	Yes
Briggs	Smith	CTE Director – Hamilton County Schools	Yes
Don	Lawson	CTE Director – Knox County Schools	Yes
Jonathan	Pierce	CTE Director - McMinn County Schools	Yes
Clark	Knight	CTE Director – Shelby County Schools	Yes
William H.	Moss	CTE Director – Wilson County Schools	No
Abby Lee	Hood	State Officer – SkillsUSA	Yes
Gay	Burden	Department of Education – Career and Technical Education	Yes
Ralph	Barnett	Department of Education – Career and Technical Education	Yes
Will	Lewis	Department of Education – Career and Technical Education	Yes
Steven	Gass	Department of Education – Career and Technical Education	No
Wanda	Harris	Department of Education – Career and Technical Education	Yes
Jackie	Baggett	Williamson County Schools	Yes
Joyce	Dykes	Department of Education – Career and Technical Education	No



**Tennessee Council for Career and Technical Education
2010 Public Forum on Career and Technical Education
Radisson Hotel at Opryland
Nashville, Tennessee
November 15, 2010**

Chairman James Neeley:

Good morning. I would like to welcome guests and council members to today's public forum. The first person that I'd like to recognize is Representative Harry Brooks of Knox County, who is an Individual that I've worked with a lot in regard to technical education and job training. So I want to welcome you and say, "Thank you for being here" and I'd ask if you've got any comments.

Speaker #1 – Representative Harry Brooks, 107th General Assembly, District 19

Representative Brooks: I just appreciate your interest in career and technical. It is a part of our future in Tennessee. It is my theory/its my contention – so goes education. In this state, so goes economic development. And a big piece economic development - that's education - is career and technical. That is a very highly successful part of what we do. If you look at just the pure numbers in regard to completion rate, and if you go into the tech centers and you look at placement rates, completion rates, you're dealing with very successful programs. I encourage you to grow that. There is nothing wrong with putting rigor in all that we do. And I encourage that as well. It can be done and it can become recognized by many more people that currently recognize the strength of what we have in Tennessee career and technical. When you're in a meeting with folks like Bill and Melinda Gates, they get the floor and they spend 15 minutes talking about career and technical education in this state and how good it's coming and how well it's doing and the successes that they have. The message is out there among some people that care. And we've just got to continue the growth of what we are trying to accomplish and just want to encourage you that if there's anything in the state legislature that stands in the way, that's inherent to a problem or stands in the way of more effective programming and greater success, let us know. Don't be bashful. But we encourage you to keep pushing. We encourage and honor and recognize the success that you folks have done. And just encourage you to keep it going. Because, one of our objectives (and it ought to be an objective) is the completion rate in high school. If you've got those three or two emphasis courses under your belt, your chances of completing that degree are excellent. We ought to just say, "Yeah, that's a pretty good idea. What are we not doing elsewhere?" But if you go beyond that and talk to those young men and women, you put real stories behind those numbers. It has a phenomenal bearing on their self confidence and their ability to look at a future career. I've seen kids that talk to kids in Tennessee that were hopelessly wandering around. Somebody in the career tech field got them involved and they're very successful today. When you've got career tech kids that go through K-12 and wind up in some postsecondary program, come out of the postsecondary program and are being recruited to earn \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year; folks, that's success! All those kids never had that vision but somebody in career tech in a high school got them onboard. So we encourage you to continue doing what you are doing. Again, but remember, if there's anything that stands in your way, let us know. Don't let that go unnoticed. Tell us. Thank you very much.

Chairman Neeley: Thank you, Representative Brooks. We will start with our Public Forum and the first person I want to recognize is James King, who is the Vice-Chancellor for the Technology Centers' Board of Regents.

Speaker #1 – James King, Vice Chancellor, Tennessee Technology Centers

James King: Excuse my voice this morning because it's a little hoarse. Representative Brooks, thank you for your remarks. Glad to have you here today. When you look at, you know we always hear a lot of negatives and Tennessee is lagging behind in this or that sometimes in education and other things. You know the things we've made great strides on, I think in the last year or two, to improve that. But I'm just going to, for lack of better term, toot the horn for technology centers right now, because we're right now getting in the national forefront in postsecondary career and technical education. And, it even led to the point (Thursday a week ago) that Bill and Melinda Gates spent an hour and a half on the technology center campus in Nashville, Tennessee, and by their choice. They were not invited. They chose –they wanted to see what was going on at one of those technology centers – that's sort of what Bill said. They spent an hour and a half – they spent a great deal of time with students, with faculty. They didn't want a – I think our new chancellor was invited to come over about 10:15, and Bill and them got there about 8:30.

Speaker #1 – James King, Vice Chancellor, Tennessee Technology Centers...continued

Bill said, "No, I don't want any of your bureaucrats here, I want to talk to students". So he spent maybe from 8:30 -10:15 -spending time with the people that he wanted to help. So they spent – and he actually had a chance to put on one of the new - we bought a new piece of equipment, one of the simulators, and Bill put the helmet on and welded for a while there with that. So, at the end of the day, it felt good when he looked across the table at new Chancellor Morgan and Rich Rhoda and said, "The technology centers are the best practice in the nation for career and technical education. And it boils down to a point of what are we doing that no one else is doing. I think the key to we stayed to our mission for career and technical education since the same mission that we started in '65. We didn't try to become something we were not. You know, our goal was to do one thing – was get people out there and put people to work. And when the Gates Foundation came in and did a study of us right after Stan Jones and the group from College America left, they came up with an amazing statistic – that out of the nation's 1,145 public two-year or less institutions, only 105 out of 1,145 had a completion rate of 50% or more over a 5 year period at 150% of the time. Now think about, and that's what's considered graduating nearly on time. And only 105 nationwide had that kind of stat. Of the 105, twenty-seven of them were the technology centers. Twenty-seven! And the report went on to say that their completion rates were 70% and no other state in the system in the nation comes anywhere close to that. So it goes back to what you said, Representative Brooks. You're graduating people and even during the time and then when our economy has been at its worst in decades, 83% of those people were put to work. I had a chance to run into a machining instructor about six or eight months ago and a young man that I considered as a good teacher and asked him how his program was going. And he said, "Not as well as I'd like." I said, "What's wrong?" And he said, "My placement's down." I said, "How bad is it?" "You can understand why", he said. It's only about 70% and I thought – this is kids who used to graduate at 100%, but 70% during when people are getting laid off. And it shows, simply shows, that even during this economy, people with skills can still get a job. And it shows that, you know, sometimes we value degrees in upper level education and that's great. All of us have been there and got that. But it shows that that's not the only road to success. A good skill can get you a good job and I think that's what if we do anything else that groups like this public forum and this council here can keep out there in front that a good graduate from one of our career and technical secondary programs or postsecondary programs can take the skills out and make a good living. And I think that's the one thing we've got to preach and with our legislative leaders and government officials that that's the only avenue to success is not a bachelor's degree or something. But it's a lot of good things going. We're proud of what's going on at the technology centers and I think we've got a couple of technology center directors who'll make a few remarks as we go into the day. But I thank you for the opportunity to speak, Commissioner.

Chairman Neeley: Any questions? Thank you. Next, I'd like to recognize Ralph Barnett, Assistant Commissioner of Career and Technical Education.

Speaker #2 – Ralph Barnett, Assistant Commissioner, Tennessee Career and Technical Education

Ralph Barnett: Thank you, Commissioner. (Pause) Commissioner, thank you again for the opportunity again to appear before the council. Thom had asked me to come and talk to a few things that we had discussed at our last council meeting that was part of the public hearing, because it really is really important. And everyone in the room and everybody in Tennessee in education and most of the people that are not in education are aware that Tennessee was awarded a Race to the Top grant, which we've now called First To The Top. We were one of the first two states to be awarded that money. And so the question is, "What does that mean to Career and Technical Education in the State of Tennessee?" And we discussed this some at the council meeting, but some of the changes that it's caused inside/internally in the Department of Education are important to note. It's really changed the operational organization to the Department of Education and it's also changed the procedures that we are following inside of the Department of Education. And so, it's been two major changes caused by us getting the First to the Top grant. Of course, \$501 million is important and half of that going to local school systems and half of that being administered by the state through different agencies. It's also important in providing training, professional development and services. Internally, the Department of Education has reorganized itself along the lines of the First to the Top grant. And the concern has been, in the Career and Technical Education community is to make sure that career and technical education doesn't lose a state director and they don't end up fragmented all across the department. Well, during the reorganization that happened inside the Department of Education, the Career and Technical Division is now called *Postsecondary Access and Success*. And that's the division that I'm assistant commissioner for. That division now contains all of Career and Technical Education as it did before. But it also has added STEM. We have a consultant for STEM that is now serving on our staff. And postsecondary access – there's three people out of the Division of Special Education who also now work in our division because they are transition specialists from secondary to postsecondary. So currently, career and technical education is housed inside of this division. Most of the things that I send out, Commissioner, I am just putting Postsecondary Access and Success and then putting a slash and putting CTE behind it because I think that it is important that we just stay together as a unit.

Speaker #2 – Ralph Barnett, Assistant Commissioner, Tennessee Career and Technical Education...continued

And I said this to the council this last time that we met. I think that would be one of the things that this council and this group would want to advocate to keep the Department of Education - to keep that division together.

Besides that division, there is a division called *College and Career Readiness* and Joe Fisher, who was Assistant Commissioner over Special Education, is over that division and that took most of the academic areas that Dr. Connie Smith was over and plus his Special ED areas, other than the ones that I've picked up. And that's the old *Division of Teaching and Learning* and *Special Education* kind of combined into one division. And then, there's our *Early Childhood* area which we did not have before at an assistant commissioner level. And *Early Childhood* is pre-K through 3 and Bobbie Lussier is over that particular area. So we have reorganized along the lines of the education grant. Operationally, we've also changed some things inside the department. When Commissioner Seivers was there, we operated what we called a PMOC process which is an electronic management system for projects that insures that if I'm assigned a project that is managed electronically, anybody can go in there and look to see where the process is, how far we are along, what the deliverables are, what the dates those deliverables are supposed to be. We have re-enacted that process again and that's been going on for about four months now. And every Monday- in fact they are meeting right now as I'm standing here – every Monday morning that group meets for an hour and a half to look at all of the current projects that are going on in the department. And, intermittently, people will be asked to come and make a presentation on the PMOC project.

The other thing that's changed inside of the Department of Education is we now have a section that's called the *Educational Delivery Unit*. Cory Curl heads that up. Educational Delivery Unit started with Tony Blair in England when he wanted someone to come in to ensure that all goals that he had set for his administration were accomplished. And this unit really manages all these operations inside of the department to ensure that each one of them is staying focused on the goals of the department and the goals of the grant. So we have the Educational Delivery Unit process now, we had the PMOC process. And the other thing that's going on right now from the First to the Top is local school systems are working on their Scopes of Work and revising those Scopes of Work if they needed to. They turned in those Scopes of Work once and this summer we spent quite a bit of time reading those. That's the other half of the \$501 million that goes to local school systems. And it's important to note that career and technical education is eligible to get that money at the local level in those Scopes of Work. Just as eligible as Special Ed or Title 1 or any other part as long as the program and the Scope of Work supports the mission of the First to the Top grant. Of course, the First to the Top grant does have STEM in it, which is a large section of what career and technical education has inside of it but also that the Scopes of Work can focus on particular programs that we have. Some people are looking at/and have added things in High Schools That Work. Some people have put in Principles of Technology labs. So there's ways that money can be used out of the Scopes of Work in the local school systems, but it has to be put into the local school systems' priorities as they do that.

The next thing that we're doing and have just completed is a transition plan for Governor Bredesen. I guess your department did that also. But we put together a transition plan from the Postsecondary Access and Success Division that was turned in as a part of the department's overall plan so that the next governor, the next commissioner, and the next people that are in leadership positions will have a plan in place in order that they can start their operations. Governor Bredesen, I think, was a little frustrated and I think probably some commissioners were too when they started and in some departments, I know in Education, really started with nothing but some pencils and paper clips on the desks with really no directions for the new commissioner and, of course, there's no training sessions for those. So, he intends for this to be a business model in order that the next governor and the next commissioners will have a plan in place. The thing that we had different in career and technical education than in any other area inside the Department of Education is we already had the 20/20 division plan. And we'd been working on that for seven years. Of course, that's online. Many of you've been a part of those meetings and helping to put that transition plan together. So the last meeting of this group started to look at the transition plan. The new plan that Will has just passed out the booklets on and the new governor's transition plan, the First to the Top, to make sure that the 20/20 plan encompassed all of those initiatives for career and technical education. So, final thing that I was going to mention was that the plan that I have given you, and some of you have already seen this at the last meeting, was the Reflect, Transform and Lead plan which was put together by the National Association of Career and Technical Education directors. Also, postsecondary, we had people from other educational agencies involved from the business areas. And we've put together that plan. This will be the national vision for career and technical education, but it also should be the state vision and it also should be the vision that every local council of career and technical education as they look at their programs at the local level to ensure that they meet that high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand types of programs.

Speaker #2 – Ralph Barnett, Assistant Commissioner, Tennessee Career and Technical Education...continued

So it's important as you look through this booklet, and if you're a bad reader like me, always start at the back, Representative Brooks, and this is one you can't start at the back, because if you start at the back, you'll end up out of order. But if you will look in through this book, this gives the national vision for career and technical education, which as I said was put together by that national organization, for a new vision for career and technical education. And it put together the five principles, and as you look on- if you flip it open and you look on page two and three, you'll start to see the principles for career and technical education on the national level. It's very important as we talk about the councils for career and technical education, both on the state level which, Tennessee is one of the few states that has a state council, but the council's, Thom, again on the local level to start to examine the mission for career and technical education on the national level. So I think we are very well positioned. We're very fortunate to have partnerships with James (King) with the Tennessee Technology Centers and the kind of partnerships that we've formed between them. Secondary to postsecondary has really been a model. If we could do that with community colleges and four-year universities we'd even improve where we are going. And that should be a mission in the future for this particular area. Right now tomorrow, Gay and Marty and I and others will be working putting together the plan for the Educational Delivery Unit for Postsecondary Access and Success. Career and Technical Education is going to continue to be a part because we really have served as a model for Postsecondary Access and Success, because on the academic side of the house, there really is no model. But on this side of the house with the Programs of Study, the work that Gay and others have been doing with the Rubric sets us apart from the rest of the side of the house and it gives the rest of the house a good example of the plan that we need these same kinds of programs in math, science, and the arts and music. So we get students enrolled in a focus of study and as most of you know the high school graduation requirements have changed to the four years of math. But probably even more important than that is every student has to have a three unit focus – three credits in an area. It doesn't have to be CTE but we're putting out about 25,000 of those a year in CTE with a three unit focus of study already. Will led a team that four years ago started working on a program – five years ago started working on Programs of Study and we're in our fourth year of the implementation of Programs of Study in the state of Tennessee. There are a lot of states that have not started. And this, if you will notice, it encourages and drives Programs of Study. So our mission is to link those Programs of Study to Tennessee Technology Centers in two and four-year universities and credentialing programs. So we're going to continue as long as we're there to work for leadership to try to also make those things happen in some of the other areas besides just in Career and Technical Education. Commissioner, I appreciate the opportunity to address the group today and I want to say again the 92% graduation rate that those 25,000 concentrators represent is a model that we need all across the Department of Education and all across our school systems. Thank you again and I'll be glad to take any questions.

Chairman Neeley: Any questions?

Joyce: I'd like to say thank you. I hope you stay.

Ralph Barnett: Well, thank you, Joyce. You mean just for the rest of the meeting?

Joyce: No, I mean that you have pushed us. I mean you have stretched us. I love the people I work with. I really, really do. I mean that you all keep us moving; you make us tired...you drive us...you make us work free...but I appreciate it.

Ralph: Well, thank you, Joyce.

Chairman Neeley: This is kind of a pet peeve with me. When they changed the name to Postsecondary Access and Success and left CTE out of it, it reminds me of once before when we were arguing about Career and Technical Education and got a lot of federal money in here to do something about Education...and nothing. After it was all over with, we didn't have any picture of what had been accomplished. To me, I think credit needs to go where credit's due. And I think CTE should still be recognized in the Department of Education. And, I really believe the fact that the graduation rates are so high, ought to put CTE in a higher position than we had it before the change. But I would strongly recommend that CTE still be highly recognized in the Department of Education because of its success rates.

Ralph Barnett: Well, I agree and as Representative Brooks knows it's in statute that Career and Technical Education would have a state director, assistant commissioner level position. I don't guess there's anything in there that says that it has to have a particular name and, of course, that wasn't my call as to how it was reorganized. But what I'm doing is, under the organizational structure that we've got, I'm trying to keep Career and Technical Education together. I'm trying to keep it at the table for every one of the discussions in every one of those divisions. But, as I said to the council, I think it's extremely important Career and Technical Education continues to have an assistant commissioner level position. If we ever lose it, as you know you lose the voice into the commissioner's office. And then once you've lost that, you have lost any real ties in being able to have strength and leverage for your division.

Chairman Neeley: Any other questions/comments? Thank you, Commissioner.

Ralph Barnett: Thank you

Chairman Neeley: Next, I want to recognize Mark Lentz, who is the Director of the Tennessee Technology Center here in Nashville.

James King: Commissioner, one of those calls I got while I was trying to speak was from Mark. His mother-in-law had a stroke in Pennsylvania and they're there this weekend so but I'll briefly because I can't--. Mark – the thing he's most proud of since he's taken this role in the last year or two is his work with the local secondary system here in Nashville. Over the years, they have not had just a great working relationship with Career and Tech here in the Metro area but he has taken from basically no dual enrollment students a couple of years ago to nearly a thousand dual enrollment students here. And so, and I think we've proven, all across the state with dual enrollment students, that student gets involved in high school, gets them credit, gives them confidence so that they can work at the postsecondary level. They will tend to move on and graduate from postsecondary institution. So, we're proud of that fact and it goes back to what we've done for years in SkillsUSA. See the young lady back there in Skills. Because we realized a few years ago at the technology center level that program youth organizations like Skills – if you can get those students into technology centers, they've already chosen technical education at some level. And we realized years ago that at the state and the regional level in Skills if you had the best welder in the state come out of high school, you want him or her at your postsecondary schools. And so we gave full scholarships to the state winners and partial scholarships to regional winners. And now, the technology center Skills is the largest postsecondary Skills program in the nation and is part of our partnerships with secondary. I think that's what Mark was going to try to talk about today is the important role of dual enrollment in the Metro area right now. But I think there have been huge successes. And I'm proud of (inaudible) and we wanted to see that partnership happen here in Metro. So I hate that he didn't get to come. He says to send his regards but it's unfortunate.

Chairman Neeley: Thank you. You know this dual enrollment is really, really important. We've got a great program in Sullivan County also that's been going on up there for a long time with dual enrollment. It's tied in to industry and it just leads to a lot more access for the students, so I'm really proud to hear that.

Next, I want to recognize Mark Power, Director of the Technology Center in Dickson.

Speaker #3 – Mark Powers, Director, Tennessee Technology Center @ Dickson

Mark Powers: Thank you, Commissioner, members of the council. It's a pleasure for me to come back again this year and I've got something a little bit more tangible to present to you. (I believe she's passing these out to you and I believe the members of the council already have a copy). Last year I came before you to talk about an idea we had of opening up a solar photovoltaic training center for green sustainable energy training. I'm here to tell you now that center is open. We have students (you've got some pictures here and a little bit of copy there that will give you a little explanation about what's been going on). It was our pleasure to have Commissioner Neeley and Chancellor Charles Manning of the Board of Regents to come out and actually flip the switch on this center. When they flipped the switch, our students and staff had designed a sun that rose up behind a tree and it was shining down on a panel and energized a fountain and the water sprayed up out of this big fountain and the State of Tennessee rose behind it with a big gold green symbols. Those pieces are now hanging on the wall in this building so if you want to come back you can see as we dismantled it. We didn't throw them away. We recycled them and hung them on the wall. But we're happy and proud to have this campus.

Speaker #3 – Mark Powers, Director, Tennessee Technology Center @ Dickson...continued

What we did is, we took an abandoned automotive service center and converted it to this green campus. And we opened this up in May. It's a partnership between the WorkForce Essentials, our WIA partner, and we are now training about 17 to 18 currently enrolled students. They're ahead of schedule. I'm not going to go through and read all of these little factoids here (you can do that for yourself). We have three working solar systems mounted at this property. One's a canopy system that you can see in the picture over the title there. We've got a roof manage system and a tracking system (computerized tracking system) off to the side of the building. To date, we've generated over \$3,000 worth of electricity and sold that back to the grid. And so this is not only a system of these three components in this system are actually working. But the students learn to work on those solar panel rays, how they're connected into three different types of inverters inside the building. So we're really proud/you see different pictures. Last year, I was struggling. I couldn't find an instructor because anybody that knew anything about solar was actually out in the field working. I didn't have anybody I could find that could come in and teach. And we were able to locate an instructor, Mr. Gary Wolfe, and he's shown there in that second picture teaching. He's lab certified. That is a North American Board of Certified Energy Professional that is teaching that curriculum. He's one of only 12 people in the State of Tennessee that have that certification. So we were tickled to death to find him and to get him to put this program together, so different pictures there of trainers, students working on different trainers. One of the last pictures there on the back side of the page is an instructor out front just before the canopy system went up. They were out there working on one of the panels. This is a real-life, real-working solar training center. We like to/hope that we can expand that. We're looking for the future, what's going on in solar. Right now most solar companies are showing or reporting double digit quotes in production of solar panels and the installation of solar panels. If you look at the industry, the numbers appear to be flat. But you have to look a little deeper because what you find is those numbers stay flat. The actual number of installations is on the rise because the cost of those installations is coming down. So as the cost comes down, it's kind of like you used to could buy a microwave and spend \$600-\$700 for a microwave. Now you can throw out \$75 and you got one. The cost of solar is starting to decline. The number of installations is on the rise and so the appearance is at the top but it's just staying flat. It's actually rising. The United States, Canada, and China are the three areas where they predict the highest growth rate in solar. Germany has led the world. They are starting to stabilize. They're starting to kind of flatten out while these other countries are starting to grow. Within the United States, California, Arizona, and New Jersey are the hot spots. Tennessee is listed in the top 10 or 12 states where solar PV activity is going to rise and grow. Hemlock in Clarksville, Wacker Chemie over in Cleveland, and a new plant coming in Clinton, and then the solar farm in West Tennessee that's on the project list. All of these across from east to west and including the middle are starting to drive the solar industry in Tennessee. A lot of that due to the leadership and the forward thinking of our current governor, commissioners that we've got onboard, Commissioner Kisber, Commissioner Neeley and others that have driven the solar market here in this state. We've got the solar, Tennessee Solar Institute, is in place and they are offering innovation and installation grants. They are out there; people are taking advantage of those. As these grants fund and kind of push the market, you are going to see the demand for workers in a trained workforce to grow. Tennessee Technology Center at Dickson has got this stand alone training center. Tennessee Technology Center at Pulaski is also involved in this same program. They were just a few months ahead of us in opening up the training portion of this. And they've already had some graduates to come out and they are already starting to place these people. So our first graduates are scheduled to come out probably at the end of next month and they are already looking. I've got a group of them down there looking to form their own company. Already, they are talking about an installation company to put in these solar panels. So, it's happening. Last year, it was just a thought; it was an idea; it was a good idea we thought. This year, you actually see that idea come to fruition. It's here.

Discussion:

Chairman Neeley: Questions?

Question from Dr. John Townsend: One of the problems that Mark ran into about connecting to public institutions into the grid, can you speak to that, Mark?

Mark Powers: Yes. We can't do it. But we worked a way around it. Legally, I'm not trying to incriminate myself here. The big bugaboo, I guess, or the big roadblock has to do with an indemnification clause that TVA has built into their clause. The state won't work with them on that. They just absolutely won't; they just won't work with TVA. The way we worked around that, we don't own the building where this is going on. We actually leased the building. So I went back to the building owners and said, "Do you want solar on your building?" They said, "Yes." I said, "Well, it's got to be part of a training program, I can work this out, I can get the solar but you've got to work the deal with TVA". That's how I did it. I had to go back to the owners of the building and get them to work out a contract with TVA and we skirted right around that legal issue. And that's how we are generating power. Public institutions cannot directly deal with the grid even if we put in solar power onto our campuses.

Commissioner Neeley: Well, this was an enduring process. In addition, we put the technology center and the local workforce development program together there in the new center. And I think it's going to serve that community down there well. Thank you for your leadership.

Mark Powers: Thank you for your support and helping in a partnership because we do go together because this is truly a partnership project and it's worked.

Commissioner Neeley: Thank you, sir.

Mark Powers: Thank you

Chairman Neeley: Next, I'd like to recognize Don Lawson, CTE Director of Knox [County] Schools.

Speaker #4 – Don Lawson, CTE Director, Knox County Schools

Don Lawson: Thank you sir. One of the things that I keep hearing about is these partnerships. I took over the position of CTE Director about six years ago in Knox County and there were some things that I wanted to see happen. I was listening to the radio show one morning and it was a do-it-yourself call in show, a home re-modeler type show, and I'm hearing about something going on in Sevier County. Well, the callers calling in were talking about – well, why do we not have students doing this? It was a perfect/practical application of what we were doing. And I'm listening; I'm thinking – well, we are we doing this? The problem is we're not telling everybody we're doing this. So, I pick up the phone and I call and the host of the show was a Gibbs graduate. I tell the screener who I am and she bumps me right to the front of the line. We spent an hour talking about what we were doing in Knox County on that show and the callers were really enthusiastic about what we were doing. So at that time, I decided we have to change what we are doing in Knox County and in education and let people know what we're doing. Our Best Practices are the things we're doing, like our graduation rates. So I set out to make a change in our advisory council and what we're doing. So, we looked and revamped; and we went from a small advisory council that was meeting one or two times a year, and they were helping us with curriculum and things, to an advisory council now that has 96 members and they come to the meetings. An area that we've gone forward with out of that, the advisory committee decided to create a foundation, one of those workarounds that you are talking about. I didn't know that in Knox County, I can't accept donations from Home Depot or Lowe's or things like that because of the bid process they can't do it. Now they can give it to the foundation but they can't give it to the local entity because then it looks like we give them our bids for taking donations. So this foundation/our advisory council created this foundation. They set it up, filed for legal status and now we have a CTE partnership.org. It's our website for our foundation. They started working and canvassing. To date this year - we've received over \$368,000 worth of donations into CTE programs, tools, equipment, things that we couldn't afford. That's been a really positive thing that we are doing. On the other hand though, it's been real positive that industry, business, organized labor have come to the table and we have a really good working group. And we're getting out and letting the community know what we do. You know, that old stigma of vocational education still exists. It's about that four-year degree and what we're doing. Well, at our meetings we talk about the difference between that apprenticeship and journeyman certificate and a four-year degree, and earning factors over the years, and how long it takes to get each one of those. We bring our counselors into those meetings and explain that. But again, I'm just in education; I'm explaining what they think I should be doing. It takes having business and industry at the table explaining about what they do before educators really listen. Let's face it – educators are educators. A math director said one day, "I love math, I loved math in high school but in the real world I'm sort of isolated from it. I had my car worked on and I paid good money to have it worked on. Plumber – I paid good money for a plumber but they really don't know the aspect of what's involved and the knowledge that's involved in today's technicians, so having that community and business support in there ready and available. The other avenue we use with our advisory council and our foundation, they give one day a week of an employee to come in and talk to a student. That student relationship is key. As an instructor, I could stand in front of a group and relay what we are doing and what we're talking about all day long. But that's my job and the students know that. But, when someone from business and industry takes their time to stop and buy a pizza and walk in and invites you to sit down for an hour and just talk about yourself, it takes on a different role. It lets that student ask questions and look at what's happening out there in a different way than what we do. It's really working well for our students. Fulton High School is an example. We started at Fulton High School two years ago and changed the concept. It was a failing school. We turned that into an academy based school - career academies. They have come off all the list of indicators except AYP and we knew that and they should be off the list next year for AYP. Split the school into four smaller communities. Our contractors in business and industry contacts are working within that school and it's making a major difference. It's changing the opinion in Knox County with the superintendent, many of our principals, our administrators. Our counselors are looking at us now and saying, "Wait a minute. We see where you are impacting what we do". So I guess what I'm trying to say is the importance of having that advisory council and going further and taking that next step and going into a foundation and doing those things. We do have to get out there. Ralph, your group has been great in selling what we do. All the brochures, the pamphlets and things that go out – the counselors love those. But we have to make sure at our end that we get those into the right hands and that we talk to the right people. Can I answer any questions?

Discussion:

Chairman Neeley: I've got one for you.

Don Lawson: Yes, sir.

Chairman Neeley: I really like what you are doing and I think you've broadened the scope of CTE a great deal with your advisory council being as large as it is and creating a foundation and using that also. But I was just sitting here wondering if, by the expansion that you've made there, whether or not you can tell if that's had any impact on dropouts?

Don Lawson: It has. We're looking currently at the numbers. Of course, our graduation rate is higher than the average in Knox County. Looking at the number of students, I was on a dropout prevention panel about three years ago. And we interviewed dropouts – called them in. But you know, one of the biggest reasons students drop out is that loss of contact – that being a part of. Well, in CTE, we've got that nailed down. Between our advisory councils, our student youth organizations, and what we do. Let's face it, a CTE teacher sees that student for four years. A math teacher may see that student for one year. We build those relationships. You know, the three R's: Rigor, Relevance and Relationships. We've got the rigor and the relevance and that relationship knocked down. We know our students and we know our parents of our students. We see them at our competitions. We see them at our events. We started a little project with race cars just recently. I've got parents coming to school on the weekends working with their sons and daughters in the shop. That's something new that was a benefit of some of the things that we started and didn't know what happened. I had a dad call and say, "You know, I've really always wanted to build a car with my son but we couldn't afford it. Can I come to school?" That's what we want. We want parents in the school. We want our doors open. Looking at the graduation rate and looking at ACT scores, we're working on all that right now. The average ACT score of my students are right around 20 or 21. Well, that's one of the 9990 goals for Knox County so I think we're there. Now, we can't rest on our laurels, we need to continue to work hard.

Chairman Neeley: Good. Anyone else got any questions or comments? (No comments). Very good. Thank you, sir.

Chairman Neeley: Next, I want to recognize Abby Lee Hood who is the Middle Tennessee Vice President of SkillsUSA from Lawrence County.

Speaker #5 – Abby Lee Hood, SkillsUSA Career and Technical Student Organization

Abby Lee Hood: Thank you. I want to say good morning and thank you for having me here. I'm kind of nervous so bear with me. My teacher said he had been asked to come and speak before this group of people, but I was asked to talk about what Career and Technical Student Organizations had to offer and what it means to me. I was reminded of a thing that I've heard as I was growing up as a little girl and that was always grow up, act older, act your age. And I think one of the things that my parents really tried to tell me is to learn how to carry and present yourself like a professional. And to me, that's what CTSO is all about. It is raising our students in high school for postsecondary education and for their jobs. And I think that's very important. And to me, that's what these organizations are all about. One of the greatest things about these organizations is that they prepare you. That's a great part of professionalism. In this economy, people that are 20 or even 30 years older than I am, are applying for the same entry level jobs as me. And that means that adolescents, even young adults, have to be prepared for their jobs. And they have to be just as trustworthy and just as independent as an adult. So these classes are classes that prepare you in your own trade. You know, if I want to be a contractor, math is going to help me. But I might need to know some masonry, or I might need to know some plumbing, or some electric. I think that's really important that these students be enrolled in career and vocational classes. CTSO organizations also get you prepared for college, whether it be a university or whether it be a postsecondary education program. One of the greatest parts of these organizations is that when you compete in competitions, you do get the chance for these scholarships. And I know personally if I don't have these scholarships, it's going to be hard for me to go to college. And I want to go to college, so one of the greatest parts of that is that I do get the chance to go to college. But I know that SkillsUSA is really great and we have the personal development program (PDP) in place. You learn how to write a resume; you do practice interview questions; and you learn to assemble a portfolio. Before I had SkillsUSA, I had no idea what a resume looked like. I didn't know what a portfolio was. I didn't even know that I needed these things. And it gets you prepared for your interviews when it comes to jobs and college. Because I know some organizations actually have interview competitions. When I joined the SkillsUSA organization and I ran for a state office, that was the first interview situation that I had ever been in. And I was very nervous, but it's very beneficial. It's not that bad. But students, you know, they need to be exposed to these things and you don't get that kind of experience unless you are in these organizations. I was really excited to hear some of these other people talking about self-confidence. Because that was one of the greatest benefits of these organizations (I know I want to ramble about this a lot).

Speaker #5 – Abby Lee Hood, SkillsUSA Career and Technical Student Organization...continued

Being in SkillsUSA and being an officer has literally given me the ability to come before people and to tell/advocate for these programs. If I hadn't been an officer, I would not have the confidence to stand before you today and say, "Hey, we need to be in these organizations". I think that's real important. A big part of being professional is knowing how to dress the part and, as any officer knows, you have to wear official dress. You know, my red blazer is part of official dress. And some students in English class, they may not be told how to dress for an interview or any type of professional environment. And these employers, there may not be a difference between Person A and Person B. They may be just as competent, but the person that dresses the part is probably going to get the job. And I think it makes a difference; it really comes down to it. So, along with all this, are also the opportunities you get being in these organizations. You can hold an office. I'm Middle Tennessee vice president and very proud of it – very glad to be here today. And I wouldn't be here today if I didn't hold this office. There are chapter offices; there are state offices; and there are national offices. And I believe one of our speakers said now that Tennessee has a SkillsUSA postsecondary president and I think that is just a great testament to how forward and outgoing SkillsUSA is. We also hold various competitions. I think that really develops these students in their trade areas and their vocational area. A lot of these competitions come with an opportunity to travel. I know this year I went to national competition and that was in Kansas City. I've never been out of Tennessee before, so that was a big deal. And also charity events – many of these organizations host and they represent these charity organizations and it's a great way to give back to the community. At our school, we do *Spirit of Santa* and it's a way for children that may not have a Christmas to have presents, to have something to open on Christmas Day. And we get to play Santa. These children send in letters and say, "This is what I really want. This is what I want to have." And it's a great way to put a smile on their faces. It's a great way to give back to the community. It's really great. I love it. We take donations; we take money; we send them out and they get to play Santa for a day. And above all, I think, SkillsUSA has a main goal and that is to help develop your student. That is to help them become a professional and that is what I really think that I am on my way to being. And I wouldn't be here today without Career and Technical Student Organizations. So I want to thank you for your time, thank you for the privilege of being here, and I'll take any questions.

Chairman Neeley: Thank you. Any questions? (No questions)

Abby Lee Hood: Thank you so much

Paul Kersey: Could I interject for a moment? My name is Paul Kersey. I am Abby Lee's advisor and teacher. This is the second year that I came up here and what you guys are doing is great. One of the things that I want to say is that it is through our career and technical education system that we get to develop these future leaders. The people that are going to be taking over for us one day because as I look around the room there's some older guys here like myself that are going to be leaving pretty soon. So things that we are doing now are going to be paid forward in the future. One of the things, and we've got to leave here in just a moment and got to get back to school, is that when we talk about the clusters that students have got to have now (is the three cluster things) is career and technical education is (I've been with them for 20 years and we're always fighting the battle). We really are always fighting the battle. Here's what's happening within our local schools and we need to address this somehow is that what they are hearing and what they are doing seems to be two different things. Right now the student has to have these three things in a focus area is that if we do not get them by the time they are freshmen year, especially by sophomore year, there's not going to be finished with us. The things that keep getting added to from state and then local keeps bumping this out of our reach. So we are trying to get our graduation rate up. We want improvement that's in career and technical education. But everything we seem to do, we keep fighting the battle is that student keeps getting out of our reach sometimes. So we've got to be sure through your efforts here that this is always possible for us to do. Because some of our counselors are not quite tuned in, I don't think, to understand fully is they think they can take almost three things of anything and plug it in and that's not the case. That's not the case. And everybody here understands it but that doesn't seem like it's filtering back down to our school systems. What I would like for us to see happen is that somehow a Board of Education member of our local system could come to a forum like this and some of our counselors come to a forum like this to understand the relevance of career and technical education before it gets way out of hand. I've enjoyed coming up here last year and this year. I always enjoy seeing my students perform. I just want to take a moment to talk to you guys. Thank you. I surely appreciate it. I would take any kind of questions you might have for a teacher at this point, because I'm the guy down there in the trenches now.

Chairman Neeley: Anybody got any questions/comments? (No questions or comments)

Paul Kersey: I appreciate your time. Thank you, sir.

Chairman Neeley: Thank you

Unknown Speaker: Commissioner, I think we ought to give our speakers an outstanding round of applause.

Chairman Neeley: Next, I will recognize Dr. John Townsend, who handles the Workforce Development at the Office of Economic Affairs at the Board of Regents.

Speaker #6 – Dr. John Townsend, Tennessee Board of Regents, Workforce Development, Office of Academic Affairs

Dr. John Townsend: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner. I appreciate the opportunity to be with you today. I work primarily with the community colleges of which there are about 29,000 students that work in our Associate of Applied Science, which are more recognized as CTE programs of which we have about 12,000 that are considered under Perkins as concentrators. One of the things that I'd like to talk about today and where I want to focus your attention is our concentrators. We know that once we can get our students into being a concentrator; that is, getting into that second year 30 hours of college credit. They are graduating at about 83%. Now if you look at our data nationally that comes from IPEDs, one of the things you notice is the general population is graduating somewhere between 11% and 18% in most of our community colleges. So if you look at becoming a sophomore then they are about eight times as apt to graduate with a degree, than otherwise. So how do we get there though? We have various problems and, unlike the community colleges/universities, we are an open enrollment campus. Anybody who comes is welcome onto our community colleges. But there are placement issues. Those students that do not come ready for college level instruction, we have to serve them. And that means not only traditional students that come from the high school directly into the community colleges but also adults who return and in some cases don't even have an ABE or GED, but we're to serve them as well. So one of the things that we do, and is one of our missions, is remediation. For the last three years, we've been working on our remediation programs; such to the point that we're trying to revamp it so that students are more quickly moved on into college credit courses. A couple of our colleges, both the Cleveland State and Jackson State, have been recognized for their revision of their programs such that students come in focused on the area of study that they are looking toward graduating in and taking that amount of mathematics or communication skills that they need in order to be successful in their program of study. Very similar to what the TTCs have done for awhile in the sense of providing just that amount. Now if a student comes in at an AAS program but then decides to transfer on over to a college track or university track rather, then they may have to go back and take some additional remediation. But particularly at Jackson State, that's one of the things that we're doing. And looking at modular (inaudible) remediation, but that also means that we're also looking at policy changes at the Board that deals with remediation. One of the big things that have come out of the most recent is the impetus to partner with secondary on your bridge program. What we hope to see is that more students, even if they don't have that 19 on the ACT as a junior, will utilize that senior year to utilize that bridge program to come out college ready. I believe there's some conversation going on, either this week or next week or the end of the month now, between secondary and Dr. Short that will be dealing with how that will function; how we look at making sure that your students are ready to go into college readiness, even going through that bridge. The second thing that is problematic. One of the things that was said just a second ago by the Knox County CTE Director was the idea of touching. That goes without saying at postsecondary. TTCs have a huge role in that. They have contact with their students every day. They are very focus impetus on support. We don't have that leisure at the universities and colleges. So, subsequently, one of the things that we are trying to do is focus some of our Perkins funds on better advising. That's one of the things that is needed. The other thing is more academic support. One problem that we find is with the recent cuts the last three years, both universities and colleges have faced about a 30% cut in state support. In order to focus on our mission which is instruction, many of the areas that have been cut are the areas of support of our students. So one of the things that we are trying to do with Perkins funds is to focus back on those types of support type activities that will help our students being more successful in the AAS programs. That's important. One of the things that I would ask the committee to consider is the idea of not only in state legislation but also in the future federal legislation. We are starting to talk about the new iteration Perkins on the national level. And, I know, there's been requests for comment by OVAE recently out of Sharon Miller's office. One of the things that Perkins used to do, and I'm not sure if it was Perkins or if it was the previous iteration. Pre-Perkins was vocational counselors in the high schools. I think that's one of the things that when those vocational counselors went away, we lost a great asset not only to secondary but also for students going into postsecondary. So that's one thing we'd asked you all to look at and think about. The same way with postsecondary, we need more advisors in postsecondary as much as we need more advisors in secondary. And, where those advisors are, student support is high. The other thing that is being more and more emphasized, and Ralph touched on this, is Programs of Study. On the national level - Programs of Study will probably be one of the major emphases coming out of the new iteration of Perkins. What that means is looking at alignments between secondary, postsecondary and even within the postsecondary. We're doing that through the Complete College America, or now in legislation in Tennessee is the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010. Community colleges along with the universities are aligning those programs that are most transferred into the four year. One of the phenomena that we are seeing though is that a lot of our AAS programs, because they are becoming as the TTCs are becoming very expensive, we're focusing at the community college level quite honestly in allied health, business, and computer sciences. Anything much out of that, community colleges are moving away from. We have about three comprehensive colleges now: one in Northeast down in Chattanooga, to some degree at Nashville, and then at Southwest in Memphis. Those are the ones that still look at like comprehensive community colleges. Most of them are moving toward a junior college model with those three emphases. So as you look at aligning your programs at secondary with the community colleges in particular, you're probably going to need to look more at those three areas for in alignment: allied health, business, and computer science are informatics. That even goes so far as Agriculture. One of the phenomena that we are seeing is our community colleges are doing away with AG. But a lot of our colleges have AAS programs, Associate of Science, in Agriculture. But, what that means is that, rather than having horticulture, they are teaching things like plant science or animal science, soil... things along that line. So, as we look toward those alignments, secondary may want to look at how we are aligning with our universities because that seems to be the model about where the colleges are going. Advisory Councils – one of the things that we were asked to talk about (that Thom asked me to talk about). We could not survive in our AAS programs without our advisory committees. That's our business and community contacts quite honestly who helps us. Allied health is all clinicals. Everybody has to go into Business and Industry areas – the hospitals, the clinics, etc. in order to get their certification. We could not survive without our business and industry partners.

Speaker #6 – Dr. John Townsend, Tennessee Board of Regents, Workforce Development, Office of Academic Affairs

So every AAS program has an Advisory Council in our community colleges. But beyond that, we also have to meet by THEC requirements certification and accreditation by professional organizations. So in other words, it's not just that it's local but it's also national certifications. So all of our programs have to meet either state or national certification licensing requirements as well as have the local advisory council as part of their process of improvement/quality improvement. Finally, I want to talk just quickly about some of the initiatives that are going on and I've already touched on the idea of these alignments between the community colleges and the four-year. We're also, through the Lumina Foundation, Dr. Short has gained a grant that's looking at our AAS programs to look at more block-type programs, cohort-type programs that might help students progress more quickly rather than taking two years might take 18 months to get an Associate Degree. So those are some of the things that are being reviewed right now. The other thing that in relation to that is – we don't talk – in fact I don't think I've ever talked much in here about our Workforce Development programs. The community colleges have served about 700,000 contact hours in Workforce Development throughout the state. In such areas as Six Sigma, Kaizen, languages for like police and medical personnel, and other type workforce in the area of allied health. Often times the community college is served as the agency which helps in continuing education units. So over 700,000 contact hours come through our community colleges every year. That's kind of the jest of it. Thank you so much for the opportunity, the Complete College Tennessee Act is kind of stirring some things up at Tennessee Board of Regents. We're doing a lot of things, got a lot of activities going in different directions. So with a new Chancellor, we're looking forward to some interesting days ahead. Are there any questions that I can answer?

Chairman Neeley: Any questions? (No questions)

Dr. John Townsend: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.

Break (10 minutes)

Chairman Neeley: The next person I want to recognize for a presentation is Bill Moss, CTE Director in Wilson County.

Speaker #7 – Bill Moss, CTE Director, Wilson County

Bill Moss: Commissioner and Council, I appreciate the opportunity to speak. We're in a real interesting time right now, in my opinion, for CTE in the state. Ralph has done a good job of getting us to this point but the part that scares me and the part that I think that we've got to re-energize our efforts with our local advisories is the fact that RTTT (Race To The Top); FTTT (whatever you want to call it). This is a scary proposition on the CTE side of the house. Because of Dan Covington, Marty, and Li-Zung and all of the people at the state, Will, Gay, all of those have done a real good job of getting us a solid data. And now, Jimmy, years ago I didn't know what data was. You didn't train me on that so I want to lay it off on you. But now everything that comes down the pike has to be data driven. And it appears, from this person's perspective, that the data is being overlooked. When I got an email last week because RTTT puts out a newsletter every Monday, and I get this newsletter and the very first part of it says that teacher evaluations will be based on (and it's one of those little fancy three color, by the way – no it's actually four color) and I'm thinking – how did they get this through so quick and it even took us six months to get somebody to agree that we could do something besides black and white? Right in the middle of it, it said, "These groups will use other data to be evaluated with." And let me bring you up to speed on that. Teacher evaluation now will be 50% observation, and the other 50% will be made up of data and data - two different parts to that. And I read down through there real quick and there's PE brought out and band brought out and something else brought out, but nothing said about CTE. And I'm thinking – Who's got better data than us? I mean we can drill it all the way down to the class, to the teacher, and all that but nobody's looking at that. And that's a real concern. I mean, our graduation rate Ralph said was 92% statewide. In my county, it's 95(%). You take out CTE people and their graduation rate goes from 81 to, I think, it's 80% as compared to 89% with CTE in there. So we make them a 9 point difference which means nobody's going to be on the list (which this is a list), Commissioner, you don't want on. They made that pretty plain. So it's a real issue but nobody's talking it. Nobody's, and Ralph I know has tried to go to these meetings and he's un-invited. And that's a real frightening part right now. And I think that – I don't know how to get at the table. CTE – and maybe I'm wrong – and I know there's other CTE Directors that are going to speak and maybe they know how to get us at the table. I'm not worried about being at the table in my district because I know I'm not there. But I also know that they can't survive without me. So that when it comes around the pike, they have to come to me and get things done. I'm being evaluated this week by the state and when I go back I'm going to ask my other counterparts in the academic arena, "When was the last time that you were evaluated by the state?" And their answer will be "What are you talking about?" Because they've never been evaluated. So we've got data again that can be used. In my whole (I'm going all around the corner, Thom, and I'm going to try to wrap it up with this) - in my district, every one of my programs has advisory committees. When I get back and after I've survived, it's going to be after Thanksgiving because it's going to take me that long to get over this evaluation. But after the evaluation, I'm going to send out an email to all my people and say to get your advisory people onboard with getting us at the table for the second thing that's going to happen in January or whenever. If we don't do it that way, I don't know how else to do it.

Speaker #7 – Bill Moss, CTE Director, Wilson County...continued

It's going to have to be a ground swell of some of the CTE directors and systems have other advisory committees. We choose not to do it in that regard. And, Connie, you can go on and write all of this down so you can see me tomorrow. We have a county one, but, we also have individual ones that are strong that fight battles all the time. I'll give you a perfect example: Steve and Ralph will remember that we had a new Director of Schools come in, right before he was coming in, our Board of Education in their infinite wisdom decided to do away with all of our 12 month AG programs. Well, that's kind of a big issue, particularly for all the special things that my system does. By the way, we had a state FFA officer out of my district and I can't remember when we've ever had one from Wilson County, so it's kind of a big deal. Well, I made two phone calls - both of them to AG teachers. The man walks into the office on the fifth day of July. His first person he spoke to was three different people from the community talking about AG and how that didn't need to be done. So they're a good group of people. They sit at the table. They fight battles for us. And I think that is the only way we are going to get at the table, Commissioner, because I don't know any other way to do it. We tried every other way to get at the table on RTTT and please understand what I'm saying is I'm not knocking anybody, but for Representative Brooks to say that CTE was touted by Bill Gates at a meeting and our director comes back in my county and says all this stuff about the Bill Gates Foundation and what they've been told and never once mentioned that. It was worth coming down here for me to hear that. Because I didn't know Bill Gates thought - I knew he could spell it because he could Google it or whatever he does with stuff. But I really am concerned right now and I know sometimes everybody else has been real positive. I think it's my job to bring concerns to you. We do a good job in CTE in the State of Tennessee. If you don't believe it, ask one of those young ones we've got graduating and because they have a credential, they're making \$.75, \$.85 or a \$1.00 more at their place of employment. And I think that's huge. So you all help us, but now we've just got to get the masses involved. And I was told by somebody that's in that hierarchy that the directors/the CTE directors, and the AG people were a force to be recognized. So I think we are going to be more of a force to be recognized. Thank you. Any questions? I hope I didn't step on any other directors that are going to speak after me. And I hope I didn't mess it up so you all won't pay attention to them. Thank you.

Chairman Neeley: There's no question that there's some challenges. And there's going to be some different challenges in the federal Race to the Top because of the way it's structured. And, if they're looking for successes (and that's what they're looking for with the Race To The Top), why do you want to bypass somebody that's already successful? And that's CTE programs in this State. And that is important. I think that's what needs to get to the head of the stream on this and being able to be in the flow of exactly what's going on and quit playing around with the CTE program in the state by Postsecondary Access and Successes. I mean what (inaudible) does that mean?

The next person I want to recognize is Jonathan Pierce, CTE Director of McMinn County.

Speaker #8 – Jonathan Pierce, CTE Director, McMinn County Schools

Jonathan Pierce: How do I follow that? I'll keep it very brief by what I want to say but I think it's all about educating. It's continually *the sky is falling*. The things that Bill (Moss) talked about is certainly true. What you just said, you know, but I think maybe we'd look through the focuses of that. Administration deals with *What are we doing?* We're trying to educate and we're trying to manipulate things to get it in place. I have a slogan back in our county that I use. It's "It's a great class for everybody's child except mine". And what we are trying to do is educate them that it's a great class for all. We've got to raise the standards. Trainable graduates – someone mentioned the solar panels that were coming and the three industries across the state. You know maybe we need to look at what this young lady presented here a few moments ago. I'm looking at trainable graduates. Will, a long time ago when I got out of college I did a survey (and he knows about how long that was), and our industry leaders there - the skills that we were providing unfortunately didn't make the top five of my top ten list. Last year I did a similar study of our local industries and it still didn't make the top five. They mention "trainable" students. They want somebody, and the jobs we are training for today probably hadn't even been created yet. So I guess we are trying something in McMinn County. We like to focus upon integrating our different classes in and selling to our hard core academic classes, if I can use that terminology, that we're teaching those things to. Our CTSO's talked about AG carrying the way, Steve, and being an AG person, you know I like to hear that. But where does that come from? It comes from that strong base of that CTSO organization. Just like this young lady here, when she becomes a taxpayer, she's going to remember what? Probably not what the skill or standard that her teacher taught on "x" day but the memories that were made through the involvement of her CTSO and whatever, James, and you were saying, "We're doing that at the postsecondary level very successfully." We have to educate our public and I think, Thom, here's where people like me have got to do a better job of bringing industry into our councils and to our advisory committees and really educating them on what's taking place in our classes today. We're trying to do that through some industry tours - taking our teachers to the industry, bringing the industry back to our classrooms and getting them involved. Connie, that's one of the things that we've got to look at on monitoring. Are we doing all aspects of the industry? In McMinn County, this last year 76% of the high school kids enrolled in at least one CTE class – 76%. And then sometimes, with all the motions, and Bill I might agree with you that I'll get shocked sometimes when these powerful advisors to education today. If you ask them what CTE was, you've got to go back to something I heard here earlier. What is it? We haven't forgotten what we are or what we're trying to do. What did it say? James you said something about don't try to become something that we're not.

Speaker #8 – Jonathan Pierce, CTE Director, McMinn County Schools...continued

Those CTE classes in my area that are stabilized are the ones that have been there, that have changed with what is needed. So, what I'm saying to you is that we're trying to do some integration. We're trying to integrate business back into our classroom because they don't know. And if they had a bad experience, if they (the taxpayers) had a bad experience in school, that's the way that they still think that it is today. So, we've got to sell our programs. What's the best seller we have? I just might as well be quiet. That young lady a few moments ago did that. You know, Commissioner Neeley, the folks you all want to see is those young people that are making a difference. Trainable – she's trainable no matter what skill comes along. So those soft skills, Thom, that we've looked at for years, maybe we need to take a hard look at strengthening them through the whole school process and advertising them. That's what I wanted to bring.

Chairman Neeley: Any questions? Pause – No questions. Thank you. You know, I remember a few years ago in the General Assembly when they were having all kind of problems with dropouts and education was on the forefront and they wanted to bring some students in and let the students just talk to the education committee. Well, guess what? It was the CTE students that came in and talked to the education committee. And I never will forget they were so hard on Career and Technical Education, this young lady stood up and was talking to them. Finally, they asked, "Well, what are you going to do?" She said, "I'm fixing to become a doctor." You could have heard a pin drop in that committee, because they realized that CTE was a lot stronger than they ever gave it any impression of being. And it's still out there today.

Next, I want to recognize Clark Knight, CTE Director of Shelby County Schools.

Speaker #9 – Clark Knight, CTE Director, Shelby County Schools

Clark Knight: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner, and thank you for this opportunity. I won't be long. We're talking a lot about partnerships in the community today and I'm going to give you a little bit of history about Shelby County's Schools. We are actually – We have two districts in the Memphis area: Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools. And that's where I'm from and we have/I have eight high schools and they are all in the municipalities of Millington, Arlington, Bartlett, Germantown, Collierville, so they are all their own schools, you know. And I have four in the North and four in the South. And did you know that you had those conversations at restaurants or at church and the Report Card comes out. Everybody's got a bad score except the one your kid's going to down the street. And so, that's what I kind of deal with. And I wanted to touch a little bit on how we do our advising committees in our area. Each one of my schools, and we have all of the program areas, has an advising committee where they bring in industry representatives. And I found that these municipalities really, even though they're Shelby County Schools, Millington thinks that's their high school, Bartlett thinks that's their high school, Bolton, Arlington community believes Arlington High School is their high school. One thing that's kind of, I guess, lessens the gap is by bringing these advisors in and having an advising committee that's based at the school that's with the community interest. Our teachers have somebody from the community that's in their program area that's their advisors. And the goal for the advising committees is to set three goals at each high school. Now this could be run from anything from having the advising committee come in and help select the national technical honors society students. We've got three of those chapters now and that's just a little tip there. That's really good because we're really a college driven system but once you start having national technical honors society you see in the requirements and they come in and look at those requirements. And the kids that are getting inducted into that, it's the same as the national honors society. And really, parents love that. Other ways that they are involved in – they come in and give us advice on equipment, they give us advice on – they come in and they'll do mock interviews through our CTSO competitions, interviews or role playing situations. They give us classroom speakers, field trip opportunities, and work based learning opportunities for our students. So it's a very integral part of our programs. Another thing that I want to touch on was the State Department, and as we're talking about partnerships, I think one of the things that's really helped me as a director coming in five years ago was the partnership that the State tried to make with the school district. And one of the things they did was have regional consultants out there. And our regional consultants in West Tennessee are Pat Todd, Keith Darnell, and Lisa Siano, and they have done an excellent job of connecting with the local school system. The State isn't the big bad brother sitting up there telling us all (but you really are but at least you've got a little brother that comes in and eases the pain too). But these consultants come in and they're as recognizable at the schools/at some of the schools as some of our central office people are. They help us. Don't think that they don't hold us accountable. We're very accountable to these the Perkins' Law. But they help us understand it. These things we're constantly having data problems and there are data issues come up and they're there for us if we have to make a Budget Amendment. They're there to help us and they act as a really good liaison for the State Department and they are a partner to our systems. And I just want to compliment them on that and I hope that continues. Thank you.

Chairman Neeley: Thank you. Anybody have any questions? (No questions). Thank you

Next, I want to recognize Sharon Ridenour, who is the Director of Schools for Campbell County.

Speaker #10 – Sharon Ridenour, Interim CTE Director, Campbell County Schools

Sharon Ridenour: Interim Director! I've taken on a new job in the last month. I've been there a month now. Thank you, Commissioner and Members of the Board. CTE has been a lifeline for Campbell County. We have about 6,000 students, 28 programs, and without it our school system would not be flourishing as it is. When you go to look and see what equipment and things have been purchased for our teachers, it's all been by CTE. I remember the first (about five years ago), we got ready to have an in-service for all of the teachers. None of them had projectors, none of them in no other department but ours. That's where they had to come to. When I was looking at promethium boards and use the latest technology that we are using they were bought out of Perkins' funds for our CTE teachers. Our other teachers didn't have those types of things. Without Perkins money, our programs in Campbell County would not be flourishing as they are. We have a success/great success story with a technology center student. He is a senior this year in high school. He will end his senior year not only as a student upon graduating from Campbell County High school but also his Associate Degree in Auto Mechanics with ASC. So we have a great success story. The young man is on target and he'll be making more money than the rest of us when he leaves there, when he finishes the program. So we have success stories that go with ours. We have dual enrollment, dual credit. Our EMT program has been quite successful with one of our first students – the first person we had, you know, the deal is you've got to be 18 to take the test. You know we get into these little things that we have to work through out of it. But we had a student pass the test. A high school student that was out of high school was out labeled to successfully be able to take the dual enrollment and be able to get that credential as they went through, which is a very important one to be doing. Of course, we're offering medical terminology, at this time we've added some more things to it. We keep trying to increase dual enrollment, dual credit for our students. You know I just had a Director of Schools that believes in college ready and all of this. But it's college ready for everyone not just for a select group. So we want our students to be successful with it. Distance Learning - we have a Perkins Grant this year to place distance learning at Campbell County High School. So we're just now getting everything in place, but I think that will be a plus for our students to be able to use. I know Jellico High School received the High School Redesign Grant, that's what it originally was called, but now it's got a new name. But when the evaluators come in and talk to the teachers there, the academic teachers versus the Career and Technical, they were all jealous because they didn't have all of the stuff that my CTE teachers had for their students to offer them. And that was one of the things that came out of the report when the evaluator came in. We have the stuff. We try to meet industry standards. And we're trying to include those things for our teachers. And academics is not going to be able to do it. That's who we focus on so much. But they were very jealous of what my teachers had and could have and use in their classroom with it. Programs of Study – that's the other thing. With the ease you all may know where the EE (evaluator) comes in when your school's on the list, because Campbell County's on the list but, hopefully, is going to come off. When the EE's say, they go visit their CTE teachers in classrooms, you know we've had standards forever. It's kind of a new word for academics and math to have to meet these standards that they've got to do. But we've known that all along. We've had those standards to be able to be a part of our curriculum. So it's not anything new for us as we go through. Our Advisory Committee – I know Thom (Smith) came and spoke to my group that we had in November. We always have a banquet in May and honor our students and our teachers for their successes that they've had during that year. So I probably could utilize them more than I do. I'm sorry for that but I'll try to do better. But without them, our programs are not going to be strong as we go through. That's all I have. Are there any questions?

Discussion:

Unknown Speaker: Now that you are the big cheese up there ---.

Sharon Ridenour: One thing that big cheese is going to do is we're going to have some new textbooks for my CTE because they got left out. I said if I don't do anything before I leave this position, they are going to get what they've been due and they've not been gotten in a while. So I'm going to take care of that, I hope so. Thank you.

Chairman Neeley: Next I'd like to recognize Steve Clariday, the CTE Director of Cleveland City Schools.

Speaker #11 – Steve Clariday, CTE Director, Cleveland City Schools

Steve Clariday: Well, the first thing that I'll say is that when I first walked in, I told Thom that I was coming here to support him. I didn't know I was supposed to speak. (Inaudible). He said, "Well, you've never been quiet before," so I guess I can speak. I'm in Cleveland City Schools. I've been there this is my going on 15 years. When I came to Cleveland, they really didn't have much in the way of vocational education. They were a high school that was developed just for academic purposes. And they had a few programs in there that thinking the kids can't do anything else, let's just put them in a vocational class. That's what I was told. When I came down there, the School Board wanted to change that and make it an integral part. The community wanted too. We have nine Fortune 500 companies that have an office or a factory or something in that town. So industry's been strong there. The first thing I did was set up – I didn't have any advisory members, never had so that's where we started. For the last 12 years, we've averaged about 120 people in the community involved in our programs as an advisory member.

Speaker #11 – Steve Clariday, CTE Director, Cleveland City Schools...continued

I set up a little bit different. I think we all kind of do that a little bit different. I set it up to where each program had 15 or more people on their advisory committee that met three times a year and they reviewed curriculum. They reviewed needs as far as equipment that helped them to develop plans to get the equipment. Lots of times my guys – we bought a 3-D printer ---only one in the community where the students and our engineering program can design a product and they can make it like that picture there is an actual piece. That kind of spun off into something. I said, "I don't have \$20,000.00. So I got four industries together. I put up a third and they put up two-thirds. Now we do like mock-ups for Whirlpool that makes stoves there or ranges. We do their knobs. When they do a plan for knobs, their engineers come into our program. They run it through our program and they'll print it out. They'll take them back to where that looks right and that doesn't look right and whatever. And saving them tens of thousands of dollars where they were going to tool-and-die shops. And these kids are sitting down with them and actually making the parts that will ultimately be on that new stove that is in somebody's house. They're doing that. So, we have a real strong group. We meet, they review. They are an integral part. Part of their mission is they volunteer to come speak to the classes. We do things to where our students do senior projects. These members come in and they have to come in after school on Saturdays at night. These students have to present to these committees. It will be a group of three. They go in and in fact do a presentation. It can be a business presentation; it can be engineering; it can be an auto mechanics program. That's been the luck with the change that we've had. The change we had was firstly for non-existent to probably as strong as any place in the State. And these people have been involved. They help direct what we need to be teaching our students. One thing they put in is part of what the State wanted us to do. We read in every class. Part of what we do in every one of our classes is we do – we'll read articles, we'll read books, we'll have book discussions in class in connection with academics. They say, "What are you doing to announce it?" You know, we're held accountable to how they score on their reading test. So we've got to help support that. We do math; we do writing; we all keep journals. They write and practice that writing. And it's an integral part of the program because the committee said, "These students need to learn how to communicate." They got a diploma but they can't communicate in my factory, I really don't need them. And they've got to talk. They've got to write. They've got to use technology. That's what's become a support for us. When I need help, I'll call my committee and like, I think Bill said, bring some in. They can help speak for me before the board. They'll come in and they'll say, "We need this." Not just me. So it's a good support and it keeps us rolling and in a positive way. Questions?

Discussion:

Chairman Neeley: Steve, I believe that it was just a short while ago that Whirlpool announced and there was all kind of speculation about them leaving down here and instead of them leaving, they announced that they were going to expand that plant. Now, a lot of that was a result of the local work force that you are an integral part of.

Steve Clariday: Right. We met quite a bit about that, about changing and they are building a whole new facility and that's where their home's going to be because they were right at the door of moving on but the educational, not just us. I'm in the city system and there's a Bradley County System and I work with my counterpart there hand-in-hand, so we can help support the local people.

Chairman Neeley: What's the impact that Wacker Chemie is going to have with you down there? Is that too far away from you?

Steve Clariday: No, they are right there pretty close. My program has been doing solar energy probably for about six years. We started out with solar vehicles. We went nationally and we were the first high school that won the solar bike race nationally and that's been about six years ago. We've been into the solar energy for awhile. We're trying to work with Cleveland State so we're programmed to get into solar construction to a certain degree. Right now, Wacker is still on the table. You know it's planned. It's more of a postsecondary thing right now. You know we are at the table talking. But, they haven't decided what impact we can have for them right now. It's mainly going to be continuing what we are doing through our engineering programs and that type of thing.

Chairman Neeley: Well, I know Hemlock up in Clarksville, for example, the first 500 people they hired was engineers. And they will follow that same pattern down there with Wacker.

Steve Clariday: That's right. That's what's going on right now.

Chairman Neeley: And then it will be another year or so before they develop that.

Steve Clariday: We're looking long range down the pike. How can we put in more green programs? You know, in the State we've been talking for awhile. We really, at our level, I guess if you want to write a special one, we haven't got together and come up with one of what to put in. A lot of us are doing some individual things.

Chairman Neeley: A lot of electrical?

Steve Clariday: Electrical is going to be a---

Chairman Neeley: Electrical is going to be big in the process. Any other questions? (No questions) Thank you.

Steve Clariday: Thank you.

Thom Smith: Commissioner, I'd like to recognize Tim Parrott from Anderson County who is visiting us. He's CTE Director up there. And, Briggs Smith was in the back. I guess he slipped out (from Hamilton County) was here today visiting us too.

Chairman Neeley: You can tell your boss up there now in your county that we missed him.

Unknown speaker #1: Alright, I'll fine him a dollar for Bill, ok?

Unknown speaker #2: \$5.00! He's a director. He can afford it.

Chairman Neeley: Has anyone else got any comments before we close?

Chairman Neeley: I just want to say in closing this meeting today: I've been involved in Career and Technical Education, Vocational Education, whatever you want to call it for a long time. I've seen the battles where other parts of Education were in trouble and Career and Technical Education bailed them out. I've seen the program set there and almost die. Then I've seen it revived. I don't think I've ever seen it as high as it is today and I think that credit goes to Commissioner Ralph Barnett for his work that he's done in regards to it. And I think one of the best things you've done – you've communicated to the CTE Directors on all kind of material which has helped it in regards to raising it up. Thank you. And I don't believe that we're all wrong when Bill Gates still calls it the CTE Program. Just chew on that for a while. I think that can drive some further action. I want to thank everybody that was here today that presented. It's good to see all of you. I want to thank the Board for being here today. It's good to see all of you. Mr. Director, thank you. Has anyone else got anything to say? If not, I'm going to close the meeting.

Chairman Neeley 11:30 a.m. - The meeting is adjourned